

## **Public Hearing on Senate Bill 833**

### **AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE TO ALLOW FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PRIOR TO TREE CUTTING BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.**

**February 20, 2015**

Good Morning, my name is Susan Malan; I am a resident of the Town of Essex, and a consultant to the Town of Essex as their Economic Developer; Chair the Essex Water Pollution Control Authority, and a member of the Essex Tree Committee.

I want to thank the members of the Committee on Transportation for allowing me to submit this testimony in support of SB 833.

Essex is comprised of three distinct villages, Centerbrook, Essex and Ivoryton and though small by population (less than 7,000); is home to a variety of maritime and cultural venues and attractions. The Essex Steam Train, Ivoryton Playhouse, the Connecticut River Museum, the Griswold Inn to name just a few and situated on the Connecticut River at the mouth of Long Island Sound. Steeped in history and culture, visitors are drawn to this charming, bucolic section of the Connecticut River Valley; with the central access point via I-91 and I-95 connecting to Rte. 9.

The excessive tree trimming that occurred last year on all, particularly on Route 9, has left a serious scar on the Connecticut River Valley aesthetics. Sadly, what was once a winding roadway flanked by trees to mask the north and southbound lanes from each other has all but been destroyed, now resembling a four lane highway. Even sadder, the serious invasive problem that persists was left untreated and therefore the remaining trees are suffering and will surely fail if not properly tended. DOT was swift in carrying out their orders -- my understanding is that the contract went to a Maine based company as they were the lowest bidder. Massive amounts of tree trunks, limbs etc. were shredded and left behind, some large logs in many instances left behind for people wanting firewood to go ahead and pick up causing many dangerous situations with trucks literally parked on Route 9 picking up logs.

I completely understand the need of DOT tending to the trees for safety and security reasons but the manner in which they devastated so many trees that were not in jeopardy of creating or adding to safety concerns was unreasonable and unnecessary.

For all of these reasons I am hopeful this bill passes to assure towns that they will be notified in advance to allow the public to comment prior to tree cutting by DOT.

I respectfully urge you to pass this bill.

Sincerely,

Susan Malan  
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